



San Pasqual Academy

Home of the Mighty Dragons!

Bulletin

July 2012

Facts-At-A-Glance

As of this writing...

- 117 youth are living at the Academy.
- Approximately 20 youth are participating in on- and off-campus work experience opportunities over the summer.
- 27 houseparents are part of the Academy's residential program.
- 11 grandparents are part of the San Pasqual Academy Neighbors Program.

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Visit the Academy website at:
www.sanpasqualacademy.org

Academy Youth Lead the Way in Building Better Health

Over seventy Academy youth attended the Polinsky Children's Center 2nd Annual Health Symposium and Fair on Saturday, May 12th. However, Academy youth were not just attendees of the event, they were active participants!

The Academy's STEP Team and Cheer Team performed several times during the day, and kicked off the event before CWS Director, Debra Zanders-Willis, addressed the crowd of foster teens and their caregivers. The day was all about educating foster youth and their caregivers about building better health, a County-wide initiative.

Academy youth were part of the culinary arts demonstration with their very own campus chef, Johnny Ellison.

They created delicious chicken and vegetable stir-fry dishes for guests to try. The Academy's Dragon Organics Program was also on hand with samples of produce from their organic farm. Peer Leaders helped educate guests about staying hydrated and healthy nutrition.

All in all, Academy youth had a terrific time learning about healthy habits and participating in games and activities. Several were lucky winners of raffle prizes and went home with a laptop computer, portable DVD player, Nintendo DSi bundle, and bicycles with helmets.

Live Well, San Diego!

Key Club Members Attend D-Con

San Pasqual Academy Key Club members attended the District Club Meeting for the Calif-Nv-Ha (California, Nevada, Hawaii) District in Santa Clara, CA from April 13th—15th. Nine of the Academy's Key Clubbers, including the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor, attended the 60th annual Key Club Convention.

For some, it was their first time on an airplane and the experience was both exciting and challenging! There were more than 3,000+ clubbers, 1,000+ advisors, 500+ Kiwanis representatives, and hundreds of Circle K (college key clubbers) at this event. Numerous chaperones and advisors were on hand to offer guidance and support to the youth.

Two Academy Key Clubbers were voting delegates for those running for next year's district office positions. Each youth participated in workshops and seminars for office holders, fundraising, public speaking, memberships, etc. Everyone agreed that the food was great (including late night pizzas), and many new relationships were formed with other district Key Club members. The event culminated with the Key Club Governor's Ball and developing plans for the next convention. Academy clubbers were very involved, participated in all activities, and enjoyed the overall experience! Next year, D-Con will be in Anaheim, CA.

Key Club members put their leadership skills (and best smiles) on display at the Academy's Class of 2012 graduation ceremony on June 21st! Key Clubbers greeted guests, handed out programs and assisted donors on stage to present scholarship awards.



School News

With the end of the school year came many celebrations ...

On June 6th, 14 eighth graders (residing at the Academy) promoted from San Pasqual Union Middle School, also known as "The Little School in the Valley." The graduates were cheered on by family members, fellow Academy youth and Academy staff. In the Fall, these new freshman will trade in their Saints' green for Dragon blue!



The days leading up to the San Pasqual Academy seniors' high school graduation ceremony were packed with fun-filled activities. June 18th was Senior Beach Day, followed by graduation rehearsal and Grad Nite at Disneyland on June 19th. With just a few hours of sleep, the seniors joined generous donors at the Senior Lunch hosted by the Friends of San Pasqual Academy on June 20th. The graduating seniors were showered with the essentials to transition to independent living. Gifts included a Sony laptop computer and carrying case, a rolling duffle bag, a personalized laundry bag filled with sheets, towels, and toiletries, a toaster oven, a George Foreman grill, gift cards, laundry baskets filled with household supplies, senior portraits and more!

June 21st was the big day for 23 seniors who received their high school diploma in the Academy gymnasium! Eight student speakers addressed the audience, sharing how the Academy changed their lives, "opening up so many doors." One graduate said, the Academy "helped change my future and put me on the road to success." The Valedictorian captured the day's overarching theme - "We did it! Now it's time to take our resiliency into the real world." For the underclassman, the Class of 2012's message was "to get as much knowledge as you can before you walk out these [Academy] doors."

Over a dozen donors presented individual and group scholarships to the graduates. Three graduates even earned a Citizenship Award from New Alternatives, Inc. and received a car, which will help them navigate the road to success. Also, recognized were three alumni - an '05 graduate earned her Bachelor's degree from Cal State University, San Marcos in

 Sociology while working full-time and parenting, an '06 graduate received a Bachelor's degree from San Francisco State University, and a '11 graduate completed the Certified Nursing Assistant program at Kaplan University. Incidentally, these alumni were also previous car recipients.

The morning celebration concluded with a reception in the Cyber Café hosted by the Friends of San Pasqual Academy. It has certainly been the Year of the Dragon for Academy graduates!

Dragons Sports Center



The Lady Dragons, led by Coach Lauren Pickard (aka Grandpa Lauren), wrapped up their softball season at the beginning of May. As the season progressed, the players found their rhythm on the diamond and made improvements in their game. Track is the newest athletic addition for the Dragons, with seven youth competing at local meets. One youth made it to the preliminaries for shot put! Not bad for the Dragons first track season...be sure to keep an eye on future Dragon track stars!



Two youth, Jessica G. and Lebari S., were recognized for their academic and athletic success at the High School Scholar Athlete Awards Banquet. All Dragon athletes were celebrated for their accomplishments at the Spring Sports Banquet on June 5th in the campus auditorium.



Spring football training is underway, and the players have been participating in scrimmages. The Dragons are making good use of their 11-man football field !



Similarly, the Lady Dragons basketball team has been participating in a summer league at Escondido Adventist Academy. Summer league games will end on July 17th but there will be plenty of intramural activities happening on campus to keep the Lady Dragons and other Academy youth active.

Several Dragons traveled to Liberty Station in San Diego to participate in the Philip Rivers 5K Run on June 16th. This family-friendly event is sponsored by the Rivers of Hope Foundation, and the proceeds help foster youth find forever families!

SCHOOL CREST DEBUTS

The 2012 Student Graduation Committee designed a school crest for the Academy as their legacy. It was proudly displayed on their graduation ceremony invitations.



Dragon – Valiant defender

Acorn – Growth, strength

Writing Pen/Plume – Educated, employment

Arrow – Readiness

Mortar Board and Diploma – Academic, scholarly achievement

Raguly Lines – Difficulties have been endured

Orange Branch/Blossom – Intellectual productivity of a creative imagination

Royal Blue – Truth, loyalty

Black – Quality of enduring, constancy

Gray – Sincerity

White – Peace

Key Words/Motto – Knowledge, Support, Hope

The Work Readiness Front

The Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Program on campus provides unique opportunities to prepare Academy youth for the world of work and expose them to different career paths. Over 20 youth are working on and off-campus. Worksites include the Academy farm, Cyber Café, Dragons Lounge, Footlocker, Lady Footlocker, Forever 21 and other local businesses.

Summer is a particularly good time for the younger students on campus to develop work skills through an agriculture class that involves both classroom instruction and hands-on experience on the farm. The recent Culinary Arts curriculum implemented on campus has also been a draw for students.

When I grow up I want to be . . .

On April 4th, the Academy hosted Career Day with over 20 employers, colleges and military representatives. Academy youth rotated through a number of presentations to learn about different career paths. They learned what type of education and training is needed for specific careers, as well as what those careers entail.

One of the most popular presentations was led by Juvenile Court Judge Blaine Bowman. He spoke to the youth about career opportunities in the field of law.



ON CAPITOL HILL



Academy alumni, Cassandra Cook, is spending the summer on Capitol Hill as an intern with the House Majority Ways and Means Committee office. Cassandra, who attends San Diego State University, is one of 15 college students participating in the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) Foster Youth Internship (FYI) program. She will have an opportunity to share her experiences in and perspectives of the foster care system with policy makers to make a difference for future generations of children who may find themselves in out-of-home care. Congrats, Cassie!

ROTARY AT WORK DAY

Rotary At Work Day is an annual event at the Academy when volunteers from the Rotary Club and Kiwanis Club work side-by-side with Academy staff and students on the campus farm. Together, they worked from 8 a.m. to noon and then enjoyed a delicious lunch, featuring fresh, organic campus produce, prepared by Cyber Café Chef Johnny. Student interns assisted with the lunch preparation.

All in all, between 125 and 150 volunteers landed on campus to assist with planting and clean up activities on the Dragon Organics farm.

Alumni Return Home for the Summer

Academy alumni are trickling home to campus, as they take a break from their college studies for the summer. Several will reside on campus in the new alumni homes. Each one bedroom suite, complete with living area, kitchen, breakfast nook, bathroom and laundry amenities, is handsomely furnished and decorated by generous donors. Many of the alumni will work on campus during their stay, and serve as role models/mentors for the younger youth on campus.



In the Fall . . .

Just as alumni are returning to campus from college, our recent Academy graduates are making a list and checking it twice before they head off to their next destination. Class of 2012 graduates will be attending colleges throughout California. Some will remain local to attend San Diego State University, California State University—San Marcos, San Diego City College, Mira Costa College, Palomar College and Southwestern Community College. Others will venture a little further away to the University of California—Davis, California State University—Sacramento, Humboldt State University, Sierra College and College of the Redwoods.



Leadership Opportunities Abound - Two foster youth were part of a panel of speakers for foster parent training this past spring. One youth presenting in South Region used his bilingual skills to offer his experiences in Spanish.

Another youth developed a skit that was professionally performed by the Playwrights Project. The poignant piece described the Academy youth's relationship with his siblings, and how journeying down one fork in the road vs. another can make a tremendous difference in one's outcomes.

What to do when a youth appropriate for the Academy isn't sure if the campus is the right fit for them? Have them participate in a Pre-Placement Visit (PPV)! A PPV gives the youth an opportunity to visit the campus over night, attend classes on campus for a day and engage in the Academy's daily routine in order to make a better decision about their placement. Additionally, prospective Academy youth now visit California State University at San Marcos for a tour to see all that college has to offer former foster youth, including SPA graduates.

To learn about upcoming PPVs, case-carrying social workers should contact Joelle Grove, HHSA Academy Screener, at (760) 233-6283 for more information.

REC ACTIVITIES

- Sportfishing
- Paddle boarding
- Water tri-cycling
- Camping
- Rock climbing
- Break dancing
- Surfing
- Sailing
- Sea kayaking
- Hiking
- Caving
- BBQing



San Pasqual Academy Neighbors Program

On April 20th, the Academy and San Pasqual Academy Neighbors (SPAN) Program were one of several San Diego stops for the County's Aging and Independence Services staff and Generations United. Academy grandparents had an opportunity to share their experiences of working with campus youth and what an impact the intergenerational program has on both sets of participants.

During the Academy youth's spring break, the grandparents hosted a BBQ, complete with crafts and games. Over 50 youth participated in the event and the three newest grandparents had an opportunity to get to know the campus youth a little better. The grandparents did such a great job coordinating and hosting this BBQ that they are now planning a 10 Year Anniversary Picnic for all Academy graduates and campus staff. The event will take place on July 29th from noon to 5:00 p.m. at Felicita Park in Escondido.

SPAN grandparents participated in the Live Well, San Diego! Summit on June 15th at the North Inland site in Escondido. Grandpa Jeff Wheat was part of the Intergenerational Panel, one of the afternoon breakout sessions, and was very well received. SPAN had information available for Summit attendees about how to become a surrogate grandparent to Academy foster youth.

Of course, the grandparents were some of the biggest fans in the audience when the Class of 2012 graduated on June 21st. The grandparents beamed with joy and applauded for each of the graduates!

Referrals...Easy as 1 - 2 - 3

Do you have a youth, 12 - 18 years old, on your caseload who is:

- not likely to find legal/emotional permanency with a specific family,
- experiencing a Change of Placement,
- being considered for an FFA placement OR
- stepping-down from a level 12 group home placement?

Consider referring the youth to San Pasqual Academy, which offers a stable, long-term placement, an individualized academic plan and intensive independent living skills training. The referral process is easy—just three simple steps:

1. The Child Welfare Services (CWS) social worker submits a completed San Pasqual Academy Assessment Form (04-304; CWS/CMS Template) via **FAX** to Tim Farley, New Alternatives, Inc. (NAI) Academy Screener, at (619) 543-9401 **and** Michael Halloran, HHSA Academy Office Assistant, at (760) 233-6280. *Be sure to provide detailed information on the Assessment Form, and if the youth has an IEP, please submit it along with the Assessment Form to expedite the review process.*
2. Once the referral is reviewed by NAI, an interview with the Academy Director and a campus tour are coordinated for the youth.
3. Following the youth's interview and tour, the CWS social worker is notified of the referral status.

Referrals are also accepted from the youth's collaterals such as the assigned judge, attorney, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), etc. PLUS the referral form is now only 2 pages in length.

The Academy has a licensed capacity for 184 youth, and spots are currently available for appropriate youth.

For more information on the referral process, please contact your Regional Academy Liaison or the HHSA Academy Screener, [Joelle Grove](#), at (760) 233-6283.

Did You Know...

As of May 2012, 276 current and former Academy youth lived on campus 2 or more years.

This breaks down to approximately 40% (276 of 688) of Academy youth:

- 2 over 6 years
- 10 over 5 years
- 40 over 4 years
- 76 over 3 years
- 148 over 2 years

In addition, San Pasqual Academy has been home to 100 sets of siblings . . . this equates to 232 youth over the years!

